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Chairman: Mr. Djumala (Vice-Chairman) ..... (Indonesia)

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In the absence of Mr. Seixas da Costa (Portugal), Mr. Djumala (Indonesia), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.

Agenda item 98: Environment and sustainable development (*continued*) (A/56/74, A/56/115-E/2001/92, A/56/115/Corr.1-E/2001/92/Corr.1, A/56/189, A/56/222-S/2001/736, A/56/303, A/56/304, A/56/318, A/56/358 and Corr.1, and A/56/395)

(a) Implementation of Agenda 21 and the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 (*continued*) (A/56/3, A/56/19, A/56/25, A/56/306, A/56/379)

1. **Mr. Levin** (Canada) said that since 1992, there had been a better understanding of the inter-relationship among the three pillars of sustainable development — protection of the environment, economic growth and social development — and it was now time to take the next step. The World Summit on Sustainable Development would provide an opportunity to suggest new ways of thinking, propose innovative solutions and take concrete action. Canada was determined to play a constructive role in the preparatory process and in the Summit itself.

2. In order to ensure that the Summit was a success it was essential to reinvigorate the discussion of sustainable development by involving all stakeholders at all levels. For that purpose, Canada would offer financial support to ensure participation by developing country officials and representatives of civil society in both the Summit and its preparatory activities. The participation of organizations of civil society had been one of the factors in the success of the Rio Summit, and thus it was important to build on that experience and ensure participation, especially of young people, both in discussions and implementation.

3. A fresh perspective was needed, as well, on the review of the implementation of Agenda 21; if progress was to be made towards the goal of bringing sustainable development to poor countries, it was necessary to analyse successes and learn from mistakes. Poverty was an underlying issue for all the sectoral questions that might be addressed at the Summit. An effective North-South partnership was therefore fundamental to the success of the Summit and to realization of the goal of sustainable development. A good approach — one that had contributed to the success of the fifth session of the Conference of Parties of the Convention to Combat Desertification — was to address a given question by integrating it into a broader context.

4. Canada had identified five broad themes which would help focus efforts to achieve sustainable development: health and environment (it planned to host a meeting of ministers of health and the environment of the Americas in 2002 to consider the impact of environmental factors on health); conservation and stewardship, which meant focusing on the sustainable use of natural resources and the conservation of the natural heritage for future generations; innovation and partnership; international environmental governance, which meant seeking new and more effective ways to cooperate; and sustainable communities, looking at sustainable development as an issue which touched the lives of all. The World Summit on Sustainable Development must reinvigorate the global commitment to sustainable development in order to make a healthy, safe and prosperous world a reality for all.

5. **Mr. Al-Haddad** (Oman) congratulated the Secretary-General on his Nobel prize and wished him and the Organization much success in meeting the enormous challenges facing them. He thanked him for his comprehensive report on agenda item 98 (a) (A/56/379). His delegation associated itself with the statement made on behalf of the Group of 77 and China on agenda item 98: Environment and sustainable development.

6. In view of the growing gap between the developed and developing countries, no country by itself could achieve the goals set for environmental protection and sustainable development. North-South dialogue must therefore be strengthened in order to bridge that gap and attempt to improve trade relations in order to achieve the goals of Agenda 21 and prepare the world for the challenges it must face. Global partnerships were essential to reduce environmental degradation and eradicate poverty and illiteracy. Governments were responsible for realizing the objectives of Agenda 21, and the formulation of national plans was therefore essential. Non-governmental organizations and other organizations of civil society also had a crucial role to play.

7. The efforts made by the Sultanate of Oman to protect the environment had been commended by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). Oman, which attached great importance to that issue, had proclaimed 2001 the Year of the Environment. It had signed all the agreements relating to environmental protection, and urged all Governments to fulfil the commitments they had made in Rio in 1992. He invited those countries which had not yet done so to sign the Kyoto Protocol and to become parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

8. Concerning marine pollution, he said that most of the oil tankers crossing the Gulf sailed along the Sultanate's shores and, in 1995, it had requested the international community to take measures to promote the protection of the marine environment around it and in the region as a whole. Moreover, Oman had enacted laws concerning dangerous materials other than oil and had established a steering committee for the issue.

9. His delegation welcomed the holding of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, which would provide an opportunity to evaluate the progress made in implementing the goals set at Rio in 1992 and to establish mechanisms to assist the developing countries and the least developed countries. It hoped that the meeting would lead to solutions to the environmental problems which were obstacles to sustainable development, and it was deeply involved in the preparatory process for the Summit.

10. **Mr. Mainali** (Nepal) said that his delegation associated itself with the statement made on behalf of the Group of 77 and China. He also thanked the Secretary-General for his report on agenda item 98 (a) (A/56/379), and congratulated the United Nations, UNEP and the Commission on Sustainable Development for their role in the implementation of Agenda 21 and the preparatory activities for the World Summit on Sustainable Development.

11. In the past decade, issues of environmental protection and sustainable development had gained momentum, but poor countries continued to depend on the exploitation of natural resources for their survival. In rich countries, unsustainable patterns of consumption continued unabated, resulting in environmental degradation.

12. Environmental problems transcended national boundaries. Those global problems called for a global response, meaning greater attention from the international community and collective action at all levels. While the Earth Summit had raised awareness of environmental problems, progress in that area had been very slow. The developing countries did not have the necessary resources to implement the objectives of Agenda 21, and the developed countries had not yet honoured their commitments in that area.

13. In the meantime, world population had increased, poor countries had become poorer and the planet was increasingly unhealthy. Those harmful trends must be reversed, not by renegotiating Agenda 21, but by making a serious commitment to implement existing provisions, including the issues that had been left out during the Rio Summit. Environmental protection was crucial for every country without exception, and all should bear their share of the responsibility. Unfortunately, the poor countries could not do it without external support, in terms of increased official development assistance, systematic debt relief, access to markets and technology, and without an external environment conducive to investment.

14. All international treaties and agreements on the environment must be implemented and adapted to the changing situation. Nepal was party to a number of those agreements and was committed to executing all their relevant provisions. Ecological preservation had always been a part of Nepalese tradition, which had eroded with its efforts to modernize. In an effort to regain lost ground, the Government had established partnerships with civil society, non-governmental organizations and community groups in the area of environmental protection and sustainable development.

15. Since Nepal was a least developed country, its activities were constrained by lack of resources and technology. By honouring their commitments made under Agenda 21 and the Brussels Declaration, the developed countries would be instrumental in removing those obstacles. While national efforts were critical, cooperation was essential to the implementation of Agenda 21; the developing countries could not finance that alone.

16. **Mr. Kasemsarn** (Thailand) said that his delegation associated itself with the statement on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

17. Thailand had always adhered to the principle of sustainable development and believed that the goal of sustainable economic and social development could not be attained without protecting the environment, but that

a balance must be struck among the three pillars of sustainable development — environmental protection, economic growth and social development.

18. His delegation was pleased to take part in the preparatory process for the World Summit on Sustainable Development, which would be a 10-year review of the progress achieved in the implementation of the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development. As agreed in General Assembly resolution 55/199, the review should focus on the identification of accomplishments and areas where further efforts were needed to implement Agenda 21.

19. He welcomed the report of the Secretary-General on progress in the preparatory activities for the World Summit on Sustainable Development (A/56/379). The preparatory activities should involve all stakeholders at all levels.

20. Thailand hoped that the priority issues identified at the round table for Asia and the Pacific, held in July 2001 at Kuala Lumpur, would be explored in greater depth and would result in concrete proposals at the Summit. Concerning international environmental governance, he said that, existing mechanisms under the multilateral environmental agreements should be strengthened in order to respond better to the needs of member countries of UNEP; creation of a new institution that would cause duplication should be avoided. The participation of young people in UNEP activities could be an effective means of raising public awareness of environmental problems.

21. At the national level, Thailand was attempting to engage various stakeholders in preparatory activities for the Summit, believing that without public awareness and strong support from all sectors of society implementation of Agenda 21 would not be successful. It was pleased to report that non-governmental organizations had been very active in the preparations for the Summit, which should facilitate a giant leap forward in the implementation of Agenda 21 and the goal of sustainable development for current and future generations.

22. **Mr. Valdes** (Chile), speaking on behalf of the Rio Group, reaffirmed the principles set forth in the Rio Declaration and Agenda 21 for the elaboration of environmental, economic and social policies aimed at sustainable development, and said that the group was committed to working together to ensure that the World Summit on Sustainable Development resulted in a reaffirmation of commitments and the formulation of concrete actions to promote sustainable development in accordance with the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities.

23. The Summit would provide a unique opportunity to evaluate the progress made. Although there had, indeed, been progress in raising awareness and in the codification of environmental law, the internal and external conditions were no more favourable for sustainable development than they had been in 1992: poverty had increased, environmental degradation had worsened and the accelerated pace of globalization was creating problems of sustainability and equity. Moreover, the developed countries had not changed their patterns of production and consumption, which were a threat to the achievement of sustainable development in the world.

24. The international community should use the Summit as an opportunity to intensify its efforts and raise the level of political will in order to propose specific actions to fulfil its commitments. Although, given the current situation, the question of security had become key, attention should not be diverted from environmental and development issues, which were international priorities. On the contrary, international cooperation must be strengthened through increased development of institutional and human capacity, a more dynamic transfer of technology and know-how and adequate financing. Complementarities must be sought between developed and developing countries and South-South cooperation strengthened.

25. At the regional level, the Rio Group had defined its sustainable development priorities. It welcomed the outcome of the sub-regional consultations held in June and July 2001 and commended the final document adopted by the regional conference for Latin America and the Caribbean as part of the preparations for the World Summit on Sustainable Development.

26. Sustainable development required balancing protection of the environment, with economic growth and social development. The only way to progress in that area was by harmonizing social, economic and environmental policy. The poverty that persisted in the region required cross-cutting and multi-sectoral environmental policies.

27. The Group believed that economic and fiscal incentives must be provided in order to encourage the

private sector to participate in public programmes for the promotion of sustainable development and to correct the imbalances caused by market forces, which had a negative impact on sustainability. Sustainable development could be ensured only in a stable and open international economic system, where the environment was no longer a source of discrimination, but of investment and trade. Environmental conditionalities should thus be avoided, export subsidies eliminated and market access improved.

28. Civil society should be encouraged to take part in decision-making in a shared and transparent way. Recognizing that the traditional lifestyles of indigenous communities were respectful of natural resources, it would be desirable to involve those communities in policy-making for sustainable development and to protect their knowledge and practices.

29. Finally, the international community should support all actions to reduce the vulnerability of communities to natural disasters, which were increasing in frequency and intensity; greenhouse gas to reduce emissions so as to mitigate the effects on the climate; to preserve biological diversity and to protect the forest. It should intensify its efforts in all those areas.

30. **Mr. Andino Salazar** (El Salvador), speaking on behalf of the countries of the Central American Integration System (Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama and Dominican Republic), expressed support for the principles contained in the statement by the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, and for the statement made by the representative of Chile on behalf of the Rio Group.

31. Sustainable development and the environment were important concerns for the countries in the region. During the recent sub-regional meeting for Central America, held in El Salvador in July, participants had reviewed the progress made and the obstacles encountered in the implementation of Agenda 21, and considered how they might use the experience acquired through the regional programme of Latin America and the Caribbean to make a contribution to the World Summit on Sustainable Development.

32. The countries of the region continued to experience great difficulties. Since the crisis that struck at the time of the Rio Conference, and despite an increase in exports, poverty remained rife. Natural disasters (hurricanes, the El Niño and La Niña phenomena, flooding, earthquakes, drought and forest fires) had increased in terms of intensity and frequency. The deterioration of the environment had resulted in severe damage to the forestry sector and threatened several thousands of species with extinction, while the abundant water resources had become highly polluted. Besides the disturbing rate of population growth, most of the poor lived in cities blighted by piles of under-treated solid waste and air pollution caused by heavy traffic and the activities of small and medium-sized businesses. The countries of the region were also struggling to achieve economic growth and to increase exports without causing further damage to the environment, attempting to find enough resources for health and education and trying to overcome the problems related to immigration and foreign debt.

33. In response to those problems, the countries of the region had begun to make efforts to integrate environmental concerns into legal and administrative provisions. As the peace process in the region advanced, the Central American countries had begun to pay greater attention to the links between trade liberalization, the environment and economic development. Thus, the five member countries of the Central American Common Market and Panama and Belize had formed the Central American Alliance for Sustainable Development, which established common objectives with a view to enhancing the quality of human life. Development strategies should therefore be designed to achieve a model of growth that generated social equality and brought about a transformation of production and consumption patterns in order to restore the environmental balance of the sub-region. The national councils for sustainable development were responsible for implementing the measures adopted by the Alliance.

34. The Central American Commission on Environment and Development (CCAD) and the Permanent Secretariat of the General Treaty on Central American Economic Integration (SIECA), regional bodies with responsibility for matters relating to the environment, development and economic integration, had proposed a series of agreements on biodiversity, hazardous waste and forests, including the Convention on the conservation of biodiversity and protection of priority wilderness areas in Central America, the regional Convention on transboundary movements of

toxic waste, the regional Convention on forests and the Central American Convention on climate change. Environmental initiatives had been taken, such as the Central American Biological Corridor, which was designed to promote the sustainable use of biological diversity. CCAD and SIECA had developed a programme designed to enhance the compatibility of regional and national initiatives and to improve coordination and cooperation between the various bodies that provided assistance to Central America in its efforts to achieve sustainable development.

35. Even though the countries in the region had ensured that sustainable development with a population focus had become a priority in political, economic and social programmes, and despite the increasingly significant contribution made by civil society in that regard, a considerable amount of work remained to be done. Extreme poverty, unsustainable patterns of production and consumption, atmospheric warming, the deterioration of the ozone layer, the reduction of biodiversity and the pollution of international waters were among the problems that affected every country in the region and were currently transforming the Earth's ecosystem. The commitments made at the Rio Conference in 1992 relating to sustainable development and environmental conservation and protection were still not being fully respected. The World Summit on Sustainable Development, due to be held the following year in South Africa, would be an opportunity to mobilize the political will of the international community to take concrete steps towards honouring the commitments made in Rio, to review progress in that regard and to reaffirm the notion of sustainable development.

36. **Ms. Motlová** (Czech Republic) said that during preparations for the World Summit on Sustainable Development, which was set to take place 10 months later, it was important to review the successes and failures since the Rio Conference, as well as to consider new measures. The preparatory process should take into account the results of regional processes, the contribution of specialist seminars, and the views expressed by stakeholders. Intergovernmental agencies should also give priority to preparations for the World Summit. She called for closer links, during the preparations, between the World Summit and the International Conference on Financing for Development.

37. Her delegation was convinced of the need for countries themselves to support the process, and the Czech Republic was making efforts to integrate principles of sustainable development into the national environment policy and sectoral policies. It was about to finalize its national strategy on sustainable development, based on a broad public debate and the pro-active involvement of the different stakeholders. To encourage changes in consumption and production patterns, it was combining legal, institutional and economic measures with awareness-raising and education campaigns.

38. With regard to the possible outcome of the Summit, her delegation aligned itself with the position of the European Union, presented by the representative of Belgium.

39. During the preparatory work for the Summit, Governments should be sufficiently exposed to the views and ideas of the stakeholders so that their actions could be coordinated successfully and have a wider impact. The scientific community should be more closely involved in decision-making, that would require the strengthening of international structures. The Summit must recognize the importance of biodiversity and the pre-eminent role of education for sustainable development. She expressed the support of her delegation for the idea of the Global Deal, although the concept still needed further elaboration.

40. **Ms. López-Camacaro** (Venezuela) said that her delegation associated itself with the statement made by the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, as well as with the statement made by the representative of Chile on behalf of the Rio Group.

41. The progress made towards implementation of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development could be evaluated at the World Summit on Sustainable Development, to be held in 2002, based on the results achieved by Member States, United Nations organizations and non-governmental organizations in the implementation of Agenda 21 during the previous 10 years.

42. Venezuela had been actively engaged in the elaboration of its national report on the implementation of Agenda 21. The National Information Office was responsible for finalizing the country profile to be presented at the Summit. The profile contained an institutional restructuring plan that provided for both

public and private sector participation in the process of sustainable development.

43. Venezuela attached great importance to the high-level intergovernmental event on financing for development that was to be held during the first half of 2002, since the inadequacy of financial resources and of the modalities for technology transfers and capacity-building was the main obstacle to the implementation of Agenda 21.

44. Venezuela was of the view that Agenda 21 should not be subject to any new negotiations or additions. Instead, the aim should be to identify those areas where special effort was needed for the implementation of Agenda 21.

45. Venezuela was making every effort to maintain a balance between economic development and the preservation and sustainable use of resources and was of the view that the World Summit should give priority to the elimination of poverty, a subject of concern to the countries of the South. The international community should promote the strengthening of programmes of cooperation by providing higher levels of financial aid so that developing countries could acquire the capacity for environmentally sound production that would ensure sustainable development and thus enable them to raise the living standards of their populations.

46. **Mr. Leslie** (Belize), speaking on behalf of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), said that the Community aligned itself with the statement made by the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran on behalf of the Group of 77 and China. Turning immediately to agenda item 98 (a), he noted with regret that the international community had made very little progress towards the realization of the objectives set at the "Rio +5" special session to review the implementation of Agenda 21. It was for that reason that a renewed call for the mobilization of the resources needed for the full implementation of the Agenda should be made at the Johannesburg Summit. CARICOM firmly believed, moreover, that Agenda 21 should not be renegotiated.

47. The 1994 Barbados Programme of Action drew upon the important principles set out in Agenda 21 in addressing the specific circumstances of small island developing States. The national action plans elaborated by CARICOM member States include a wide range of programmes to promote sustainable development. In that connection, the University of the West Indies continued to assist the member States of CARICOM in building sustainable capacities through short- and long-term training programmes. In collaboration with the CARICOM Secretariat and other partners, the University had also been engaged in a number of baseline studies that addressed the impact of climate change on the region's economies. It should be noted, however, that the efforts of CARICOM countries were hampered by the lack of adequate financial resources.

48. The condition of the natural environment was critical to the survival of small island developing States. Thus the devastation caused by natural disasters, especially hurricanes, could have a severe impact on the economic and social sectors of CARICOM countries. The members of the Community therefore wished to reaffirm their commitment to the implementation of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Kyoto Protocol. Climate change had, among other things, increased the scarcity and diminished the quality of fresh water and had contributed to the degradation of coastal zones and marine ecosystems in all CARICOM member countries, which therefore continued to seek the support of the United Nations for a special regime for the Caribbean Sea.

49. In addition to environment-related problems, globalization and trade liberalization had adversely affected the open economies of CARICOM countries. Even though the objectives of the Rio Conference had not been realized in the region, Governments continued to work closely with civil society and the private sector to fulfil those objectives and to promote public awareness campaigns on issues related to sustainable development.

50. Turning to sub-items (d) and (g) of agenda item 98, he was heartened to note the number of countries that had become parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity and signed the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety. Access to genetic resources must be equitable if all stakeholders, in particular indigenous populations, were to be in a position to fully implement the Convention. In that connection, he commended the United Nations on its efforts to promote new and renewable sources of energy and appealed for the recommendations of the Commission on Sustainable Development in that field to be widely promoted and implemented. He welcomed, in particular, the World Solar Programme 1996-2005, which provided energy to

rural and isolated communities in developing countries, and urged that measures be taken to address the technological, economic and legislative constraints to its implementation in CARICOM countries.

51. **Mr. Howell** (Acting Director of the International Labour Organization) said that the success or failure of policies for environmental sustainability was closely interwined with employment strategies in three key sectors — energy, transport and agriculture.

52. Referring, firstly, to energy, he said that lack of rural energy was one of the most serious global problems; not only did it trap people in poverty and push them to migrate to urban areas but it also exacerbated deforestation and soil degradation. Members of the international community must therefore work together closely to define major orientations so as to promote efficient energy choices.

53. Turning to transport, he said that sector accounted for much of the energy consumed and was a major source of greenhouse gases and other pollutants. Appropriate investment strategies for sustainable development, bo as to vehicle production and infrastructure development, would also provide a major b to jobs.

54. As to agriculture, he said that it accounted for 3 per cent of jobs in the industrialized countries as compared to over 80 per cent in the 10 poorest countries. Improving the productivity of land and of labour was therefore critical to poverty reduction. Public/private partnerships must be strengthened in order to develop radically new technologies and raise incomes in the primary agricultural sector.

55. ILO's SafeWork programme sought to promote the health and safety of all workers and gave priority to workers in the most hazardous sectors. To that end ILO was working closely with the World Health Organization and the United Nations Environment Programme. In that connection he said that prevention was the best means of securing protection.

56. The links between environment, employment and sustainable development would be on the agenda of the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg. ILO was convinced that decent working conditions were a factor in sustainable development, whence the need to integrate employment and environmental policies; one way of doing that was through labour-intensive public works projects. ILO was working to promote an employment policy founded on economic development, the rights of workers, social dialogue and social protection and it believed that environmental policies would play a key role in promoting change in the labour market.

57. **Mr. Ingolfsson** (Iceland) said that the forthcoming Summit on sustainable development would give the international community an opportunity to reaffirm the commitments it had made at the Rio Conference; at the same time, it should take into account recent economic, technological and political changes and reflect new thinking in those fields. He suggested that, in keeping with the work of the General Assembly, discussions should focus on the fight against poverty, resource efficiency and protection of the functional integrity of ecosystems. The principle of "decoupling" aid could be helpful in achieving economic growth.

58. The Summit should also emphasize the need to protect the oceans, for the latter played an essential role in the ecosystems and in ensuring the sustainable development of a number of developing countries, particularly small island States. There had been several encouraging developments in recent years, such as the adoption of the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants and the holding of the Reykjavik Conference on Responsible Fisheries in the Marine Ecosystem which had been jointly organized by the Government of Iceland and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, with the sponsorship of the Government of Norway. The Declaration adopted at that Conference was a landmark contribution of the fisheries nations to the World Summit on Sustainable Development.

59. **Mr. Shen** Goufant (China) said that he fully supported the statement made by the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran on behalf of the Group of 77 and China. While many countries had integrated sustainable development into their economic and social development strategies since the adoption of Agenda 21, the global environment continued to deteriorate and the goals set at the Rio Conference were far from being achieved. Little progress had been made in international cooperation on such issues as mobilization of financial resources and the transfer of technology. Official development assistance as a percentage of the gross domestic product of the developed countries had reached an all-time low,

falling from 0.35 per cent in 1991 to 0.22 per cent in 2000.

60. The forthcoming World Summit on Sustainable Development would be an opportunity to reaffirm the commitments made at Rio; a number of elements were critical to its success. Firstly, it should reaffirm the principles adopted at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, such as the principles of common but differentiated responsibilities and sovereign rights over resources and promote their implementation. Secondly, it should encourage full implementation of Agenda 21 through the adoption of specific programmes. Thirdly, it should give priority to helping developing countries overcome the difficulties they encountered in achieving the goals of Agenda 21 and, inter alia, provide them with financial and technical support. To that end, a link should be established between sectoral issues and cross-sectoral issues so as to result in specific timetables and programmes to facilitate the mobilization of financial resources, the transfer of technology and capacity-building. Fourthly, discussions regarding international environmental governance should be conducted on the basis of the three pillars of sustainable development and the resolutions adopted by the General Assembly and should reflect the views of all parties concerned.

61. Finally, he said that his Government attached great importance to the World Summit on Sustainable Development and had already set up a national preparatory committee and organized a preparatory meeting at the level of the countries of North-East Asia.

62. **Mr. Lorenzo** (Mexico), associating himself with the statement made by the representative of Chile on behalf of the Rio Group, said that environmental degradation created world poverty or made it worse and that conversely in areas affected by poverty the natural environment was being degraded more than elsewhere, which explained why it was essential to manage natural resources rationally in order to further the objectives of poverty eradication and the implementation of sustainable development.

63. The World Summit on Sustainable Development offered the international community an excellent opportunity to reaffirm its commitments in support of the Rio Declaration and Agenda 21, to draw up a balance sheet of progress made in the area of environmental protection and sustainable development, to look at the new challenges to be overcome and to give a new impetus to its actions. It must, however, agree on the same vision of the future and demonstrate the political will to take action in keeping with the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities.

64. Mexico was taking an active part in the work of the Open-ended Intergovernmental Group of Ministers or Their Representatives on International Environmental Governance, whose work, which consisted of making a detailed analysis of current institutional weaknesses and future needs and options in terms of strengthening international environmental governance, would contribute significantly to the Summit's preparatory process. Furthermore, Mexico, as one of the 12 countries that provided a natural habitat for two thirds of the planet's living species, had signed the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety to the Convention on Biological Diversity. It considered that it was necessary for capacity-building activities under the Protocol to be carried out in coordination with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and the World Trade Organization (WTO), and called on more countries to sign that important instrument, which enabled biosafety regulations to be clarified. Mexico also reaffirmed its support for the Kyoto Protocol, having intensified its efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions despite the fact that its share of total global emissions was minimal. Mexico considered that the agreements reached at the Sixth Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change represented a good starting point for all the countries in the world to tackle jointly the problem of climate change in keeping with the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities. For, in order to solve the problem of climate change, it would be necessary to ensure that there was better compatibility between economic and environmental policies taking into account the needs and special features of each country.

65. **Ms. Georgieva** (Director of the Environment Department, World Bank) said that the international community had no choice but to make progress at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg, because its survival depended on the issues on its agenda, such as poverty, environmental degradation, climate change, peace and security, and the spread of diseases such as AIDS. Living up to its

commitments was more important than ever since the events of 11 September 2001, which would result in even more suffering for the poor in the developing world. Thus economic growth could be lower by between 0.5 and 0.75 per cent in 2002, condemning up to 10 million more people to live in poverty. Between 20,000 and 40,000 children under the age of five could die from the economic consequences of the attacks, as poverty hampered the fight against malnutrition and various childhood diseases.

66. In that context, the opportunities for millions of people currently deprived of the benefits of economic and social progress must be increased, and in an environmentally sound manner. Yet, the juxtaposition of resource depletion and population growth placed the sustainability of development at risk in a large number of poor countries: some developing countries were losing between 4 and 8 per cent of their gross domestic product because of losses of productivity and natural capital due to environmental degradation. That was why the Board of Directors of the World Bank had approved a new environment strategy which supported development that did not come at the expense of people's health and livelihoods or at the cost of the long-term sustainability of natural resources. There was another factor to be taken into account — that of conflict and violence which were the source of some of the most pressing social and economic problems in the world in that they were a constraint on development and damaged the physical, economic and human capital and social fabric of a country. Prevention and reconstruction were central to the World Bank's poverty reduction policies.

67. In the light of the complexity of the challenges faced, it was essential that the Summit should address the broader issues of sustainability and not focus solely on the environment. That was why the next edition of the *World Development Report*, which would be launched at the Summit, would address the interaction between growth, poverty reduction, social cohesion and the environment. The World Bank hoped that that report would contribute to the global debate at a time when it was imperative for individuals and communities to better manage their human, social, physical and natural resources in the long term and to rethink their basic assumptions about how to use the planet's riches and plan economic development. The World Bank was keen to see the international community make a stronger effort to reform the system of national accounts and adopt more accurate measures of growth and development.

68. The World Bank would also continue its work on the interdependence between sustainability and poverty reduction, with a special focus on energy, water, land and food security for the developing world. It fully endorsed the development goals set out in the Millennium Declaration, which were widely accepted as key indicators of sustainable development. As the Johannesburg Summit approached, the Bank would promote financial assistance for projects with strong environmental and social development objectives; pursue policies, regulations and enforcement for private-sector investment in socially responsible activities and in environmental goods and services; and create innovative mechanisms and new markets that served the needs of the environment, such as the Prototype Carbon Fund (PCF) and the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF). The World Bank also strove to assume social and "green" responsibility in its own behaviour by reducing the ecological footprint of its physical facilities and setting benchmarks for its social and environmental performance. The International Finance Corporation (IFC) had an important role to play in promoting such corporate responsibility by supporting sustainable and equitable private-sector investment in the developing world.

69. While the Johannesburg agenda was challenging and daunting, it offered a real chance to demonstrate the power of collaboration and to work for the common good, provided that all relevant actors — in the United Nations system, Governments, businesses, urban and rural communities, rich and poor countries — joined forces to overcome humanity's tremendous challenges and chose the path of sustainable development.

70. **Mr. Serbini** (Brunei Darussalam) said that his delegation associated itself with the statement made on behalf of the Group of 77 and China. The Rio Conference had enabled the international community to develop a clear vision of the goal of sustainable development and to reach broad agreement on how it should be achieved. Unfortunately, progress towards that objective was still insufficient. As the Secretary-General had noted in his report (A/56/379), the World Summit on Sustainable Development would take place at a crucial juncture and would be a turning point in moving the global society to a sustainable future. The Summit therefore provided an opportunity to review

the implementation of the Rio commitments and to devise concrete strategies.

71. Since environmental protection was a broad and complex issue with political, economic and social dimensions, the effective implementation of Agenda 21 required a considerable amount of resources, and its management required a multifaceted approach that balanced economic, social and environmental considerations and took into account the regional and international impact of the actions taken. The developed countries should therefore share their expertise and experience with developing countries to build their scientific and technological capacity and knowledge, and those partnerships should promote local ownership of initiatives. The principle of common but differentiated responsibility must be put into practice and each country's particular features, such as its social fabric or the orientation of its national economic development objectives, must be taken into account.

72. Brunei Darussalam was committed to strengthening its environmental management and sustainable development efforts through its national environment strategy and the regional initiatives being taken through the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) to address issues such as the haze problem.

73. In that connection, another important element for achieving environmental sustainability was the need for proactive public awareness campaigns and early warning systems to highlight the importance of environmental protection and to make the public more vigilant with respect to environmental issues.

74. **Mr. Choi** Seok-young (Republic of Korea) said that it was encouraging to note that an array of activities had been organized at the national, subregional and regional levels to ensure the success of the World Summit on Sustainable Development. The innovative, bottom-up approach being taken would facilitate the identification of each region's specific needs and the global actions required from each region's perspective. However, attention should also be paid to the possible shortcomings of that approach, such as lack of transparency and inefficient coordination at the global level. His delegation firmly believed that the Summit should revitalize political momentum for mapping out future actions on the basis of the progress made thus far and the major constraints identified, though without rewriting the commitments agreed upon at the Rio Conference. The Summit should also reflect the impact of the rapid globalization process, which had not been clearly conceived 10 years earlier at the Rio Conference. Globalization opened up new prospects for development, but could also result in growing disparities and marginalization. Accordingly, an overarching theme of the Summit should be poverty eradication and sustainable development in the context of globalization.

75. The Republic of Korea attached great importance to the outcome of the International Conference on Financing for Development, to be held in Monterrey, since it would provide a basis for addressing issues related to the means of implementing Agenda 21. The goals and targets set out in the Millennium Declaration could also serve to guide the preparatory process. The various stakeholders had an important role to play in those preparations. Also important was the role of information and communication technologies, which were a driving force for the new information society.

76. The Summit should also build on the progress made in international environmental governance. Since the Rio Conference, environmental protection had been institutionalized in various forms, but cooperation was needed to streamline that endeavour and to ensure that the establishment of new bodies or the redefinition of relations among environmental organizations was considered from a long-term perspective, taking into account the complexity of the issues involved.

77. The Republic of Korea had supported regional cooperation for the implementation of Agenda 21, enacted appropriate legislation and ensured that civil society and local governments participated fully in domestic decision-making and local Agenda 21 initiatives. In addition, it intended to contribute to the trust fund established to help enable delegations from developing countries to attend the Summit, and would participate actively throughout the preparatory process.

78. **Mr. Ayari** (Tunisia) said that he associated himself with the views expressed by the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran on behalf of the Group of 77 and China. The sustainable development and environmental protection objectives that the international community had set in Rio were still far from being achieved: environmental degradation continued on a global scale; poverty remained a source of concern; the gap between rich and poor countries

continued to widen; and overall consumption, production and pollutant and toxic substance emission practices remained inconsistent with a pattern of sustainable development. In the face of the increasing threats to the ecological balance, it had become imperative to focus more closely on the use of natural resources and the constant protection of ecological balances and to take active measures to combat natural scourges such as desertification.

79. The World Summit on Sustainable Development would discuss three essential issues: economic growth and development, social development and environmental protection, while recognizing their interdependence. It would also reaffirm the fundamental principle of the common but differentiated responsibilities of States. Tunisia also attached great importance to the transparency of the Rio +10 process, which, after assessing progress over the past 10 years, should develop specific action for the future and establish a detailed schedule for implementation of the Rio commitments, particularly those involving human and institutional capacity-building, the transfer of ecologically rational technologies and the provision of financial resources. It hoped that the Johannesburg Summit would mark a turning point and would lead to the adoption of effective measures to combat poverty, which was one of the causes of environmental degradation.

80. The objective of Tunisia's policy in the area of environmental protection was to preserve the ecological balance, protect natural and human resources and combat various forms of pollution. It was also aimed at reconciling development needs with environmental imperatives in order to protect natural resources, mitigate threats thereto and improve living conditions for the population. Tunisia was a signatory of most of the international conventions on environmental protection and had been among the first countries to implement the Rio Summit recommendations at the national level by setting up an institutional and legal framework for protection of the environment, establishing a national sustainable development committee, developing a national Agenda 21 programme and mainstreaming environmental protection into the various economic and social plans. That policy focused primarily on three areas: preservation of the overall environmental balance and sound management of the nation's resources; containment of pollution within the limits acceptable under international regulations; and involvement of citizens in the protection of their environment and the promotion of conditions for sustainable development. A corollary of that policy had been the introduction of new measures aimed essentially at eliminating the causes of poverty and social exclusion, promoting more rational and cleaner patterns of consumption and production, controlling demographic growth and protecting health.

81. According to the basic parameters for sustainable development, the results achieved at all levels had exceeded expectations: the proportion of the population living below the poverty line had fallen from 7.6 per cent in 1990 to 4.2 per cent in 2000. Those results could be attributed to a comprehensive strategy aimed at giving all citizens an adequate minimum income and to improvement of the standard of living through universal access to drinking water, electricity and communications and transport networks and development of the health infrastructure.

82. While that great collective task which mobilized the entire international community would, of course, require human and material resources, it would also require strengthened international assistance for the implementation of environmental protection conventions and promotion of a new global partnership and a new social ethic that must be the goal and the aspiration of the Johannesburg Summit.

83. **Ms. Viotti** (Brazil) associated her delegation with the statements by the delegation of the Islamic Republic of Iran on behalf of the Group of 77 and China and of Chile on behalf of the Rio Group. She took the opportunity to make some preliminary observations on the outcome of the Regional Preparatory Conference of Latin America and the Caribbean for the World Summit on Sustainable Development held in Rio on 23 and 24 October 2000. The Conference had been held at ministerial level with the support of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). In his opening address, President Fernando Enrique Cardoso had underscored Brazil's strong commitment to sustainable development and vigourous implementation of the agreements reached at Rio almost a decade earlier. He had called for a new solidarity based on the principle of common but differentiated responsibility, in other words allowing for an adequate apportionment of the burden, bearing in mind the special

responsibility of some countries which historically had accounted for a large portion of global resource use to ensure that the developing countries had the means for sustainable development. The Conference had adopted the Rio de Janeiro Platform for Action on the road to Johannesburg 2002. The participants had recognized that significant progress had been made at the global and regional levels in terms of greater awareness, enhanced institutions, norms and regulations, and participation by civil society, which had helped to incorporate the environmental dimension into development. They had also noted the obstacles to the achievement of sustainable development, including the negative impact of globalization, insufficient transfer of technology despite the efforts of the countries of the region to create a more favourable environment, lack of resources, and the persistent problem of access for developing country exports to the markets of developed countries. Future commitments and actions had been identified, which included capacity and institution-building and an integrated approach. The Conference had drawn attention to the importance of strengthening international cooperation in many sectors relating to the environment and development and taken note of the role of civil society and major groups in the promotion of sustainable development. It had suggested that such cross-sectoral issues as finance, science and technology, capacity-building and vulnerability should be given high priority on the agenda of the World Summit on Sustainable Development. Concerning finance, the Ministers had highlighted the importance of meeting the targets for official development assistance, the need to encourage private sector participation in the promotion of sustainable development through appropriate incentives, ensuring that additional funds were available to the Global Environment Facility, the need for debt relief for highly indebted poor countries, and ensuring market access in developed countries for the exports of developing countries. Regarding technology transfer, they had called for measures to be taken to encourage the establishment of effective mechanisms to facilitate the transfer of clean technologies in the service of sustainable development. Given the vulnerability of many countries of the region to natural disasters, the Ministers had stressed the role of planning instruments, land management policy, risk awareness and early warning systems. They had called for the definition of a set of core indicators, including a vulnerability index, that would make progress in that area possible. Finally, they had proposed an overarching theme for the Johannesburg Summit: Towards a new globalization which ensures that development is sustainable, equitable and inclusive.

84. **Mr. Al-Hazeem** (Kuwait) said that his country had participated in all the United Nations conferences related to environment and sustainable development and looked forward to participating in the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg in September 2002. Kuwait attached particular importance to environmental protection and regional cooperation in that field. The environment sector had been placed under the authority of an institution with full powers; the Council for Environmental Protection was a government advisory body with responsibility to collect data and advise on policy. The General Office of the Environment was another body involved with environmental issues. In addition, a regional organization for the protection of the marine environment had been established, which was headquartered in Kuwait. Kuwait attached great importance to its membership in the Gulf Cooperation Council, which since its establishment had made considerable progress in all fields, especially the environment. Protection of the environment had become an essential criterion for the approval of any type of project, whether State-sponsored or private. At their eighteenth Summit meeting held in Kuwait in 1997, the Heads of State of Council member countries had adopted a unified system for waste management through the enactment of a law protecting people and the environment against harmful by-products of the production, storage and treatment of waste.

85. Kuwait was firmly convinced that there was a close link between poverty and environmental degradation. Environmental policies should be accompanied by poverty elimination strategies. In that context, the Malmö Ministerial Declaration and the resolutions of the UNEP Governing Council should be borne in mind. With the support of Member States, Kuwait had requested that an agenda item entitled "Observance of the International Day for Preventing the Exploitation of the Environment in War and Armed Conflict" should be included in the agenda of the current session of the General Assembly. That initiative was in keeping with the decisions adopted at the Millennium Summit, where Member States had made a commitment to respect nature in the interests of future generations and to protect the common environment.

86. **Mr. Benmehidi** (Algeria) said that the World Summit on Sustainable Development was expected to undertake an objective assessment of the implementation of Agenda 21. The Secretary-General's report (A/56/379) on progress in preparatory activities for the World Summit on Sustainable Development showed that the various concerns expressed during the different preparatory meetings were essentially common to all regions of the developing world. They related to the state of the environment, deepening poverty, the adverse impact of globalization on developing countries, weak infrastructure in those countries, the paucity of financial resources for sustainable development, as well as the external debt burden. The report also showed a full awareness, especially in Africa, of the importance of having an overall environment, including peace and security, the promotion of democracy and respect for human rights, as well as good governance at all levels, that was conducive to sustainable development. Clearly, the preparatory process was already highlighting the concerns of the poor countries with respect to capacity-building, harnessing science for development, transferring technology and the inescapable need to set aside for sustainable development a level of funding in line with the principle of common but differentiated responsibility through concessional loans or foreign direct investment.

87. In the next stages of the preparatory process, the emphasis of the debate would no doubt shift to the relationship between the environment and deepening poverty; yet the Rio Summit had already exhausted and resolved the issue by stating in Agenda 21 that the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development were equally important.

88. In that regard, it was highly advisable to avoid, during the first substantive session of the Preparatory Committee in January 2002, perpetuating a culture which would lead either side to establish an unwarranted and inappropriate order of priority among the three pillars of sustainable development, namely, economic growth, social development and environmental protection. It would be more useful, for overall development, to focus efforts on promoting greater synergy and coordination between the work of the International Conference on Financing for Development and the Rio +10 process. Indeed, increased interdependence between countries and regions as a result of globalization and the interrelationship between the economic, social and environmental spheres called for comprehensive responses within a global approach.

89. The United Nations must play a leading role in foregoing and promoting that global partnership. It was in that spirit that Algeria had endorsed the idea of putting into place an international environmental governance process in which UNEP would play a lead role.

90. He trusted that the international community would be able to identify the shortcomings in the implementation of Agenda 21 and find solutions to them in a spirit of consensus.

91. **Ms. Singh** (India) said that her delegation associated itself with the statement made by the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran on behalf of the Group of 77 and China. An international consensus already existed on the basic principles, concepts and pillars of sustainable development. They were enunciated in the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development and Agenda 21, which still remained relevant. For developing countries, economic growth and poverty eradication remained the overriding priorities. She believed that the World Summit on Sustainable Development should not attempt to re-negotiate Agenda 21. The Summit should seek to address the difficulties and constraints encountered in the implementation of Agenda 21 and explore practical ways and means of overcoming them, based on the principle of common but differentiated responsibility.

92. At the special session of the General Assembly in 1997 to review the implementation of Agenda 21, it was acknowledged that considerable progress had been made at the national level but that, at the same time, there was an urgent need to address the lack of fulfilment of the international commitments voluntarily entered into by developed countries either to assist developing countries or to meet their own obligations on account of their historical industrialization as well as their current unsustainable patterns of production and consumption.

93. Given the limited resources and lack of institutional capacity in developing countries, they required international assistance in their efforts directed towards sustainable development. Her delegation hoped that at the Johannesburg Summit, it would be possible to agree on time-bound

commitments on the means of implementation particularly on transfer of environmentally sound technology on concessional terms to developing countries, and on making financial resources available to them. Equally important, was an enabling international environment supportive of development that ensured the participation of developing countries in norm-setting and economic decision-making processes as well as a fair, rule-based and non-discriminatory trading system. India hoped that the International Conference on Financing for Development and the forthcoming WTO Ministerial Conference would produce positive results in that regard.

94. India supported the "bottom-up approach" agreed upon for the Johannesburg Summit. It had begun preparations and established an institutional structure to that end. It had participated in the South Asian subregional meeting held in Colombo in September and looked forward to the Asia-Pacific regional meeting to be held in Cambodia in November.

95. Governance issues should not be examined from a narrow perspective confined to the environment. The existence and role of a number of other international institutions working to achieve sustainable development must be recognized. Any governance structure that ignored that primary consideration would be out of tune with realities, and ineffective.

96. Her delegation hoped that the Johannesburg Summit would reinvigorate a global partnership that took into account the special needs of developing countries and contributed to the achievement of the objectives of the Rio Conference on Environment and Development and the Millennium Summit.

97. **Ms. Pià Comella** (Andorra) noted with satisfaction that the round tables and consultations organized with the main actors had, by guaranteeing full and dynamic participation in the preparatory process, helped to identify key issues for consideration at the Johannesburg Summit. Andorra had participated in the European regional preparatory meeting held in Geneva on 23 and 24 September. Priority themes were beginning to emerge and it was vital to take note of them in order to establish lines of action as a basis for the international community's renewal of its commitment to sustainable development. In that connection, it would doubtless be wise to draft a preliminary synthesis of the conclusions of all the regional round tables before the second session of the Preparatory Committee.

98. The overall objective of the Johannesburg Summit should be to strengthen the international community's commitment to sustainable development. That meant that governments must not only have the will to honour commitments undertaken since 1992, but also to go beyond, to set new goals for themselves or new means of fulfilling commitments. Initially, there should be a frank review of progress achieved since the Rio Conference, which would then make it possible to define a number of specific and realistic initiatives with a view to improving the implementation of Agenda 21 in the years to come. Moreover, Andorra shared the views of the Secretary-General concerning the issues which should be given special attention at the World Summit, namely: (a) poverty and poverty eradication; (b) the protection, conservation and sound management of areas and ecosystems necessary for the sustainable development and health of the entire planet; (c) capacity-building and international cooperation; and (d) Africa's place in the globalization process and its consequences for the sustainable development of the continent and in general; (e) overconsumption, a phenomenon closely linked to current patterns of production, which, to a large extent, determined the impact of Western societies on the environment.

99. Andorra had focused particular attention on the Summit preparations; to that end, it was currently carrying out a study of the various conventions. It expected to accede soon to the Convention to Combat Desertification, the Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer and the Convention on Biological Diversity. It was also in the process of experimenting with practical modalities for the implementation of Agenda 21, in particular at the local level, where certain authorities had taken initiatives to define their development models in the new century. At the national level, the Ministry of the Environment had undertaken the establishment of a framework for integrating the principles of sustainable development into sectoral policies.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.